



NAVY NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSOCIATION

Keepers of the Dragon

SUMMER EDITION

JUNE 1996

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FROM THE PRESIDENT: Well shipmates, it's been awhile (January 1996) since I have had the opportunity to talk to you. I thought that I would pass on an update for the October 1996 reunion here in sunny San Diego. Joe Bland is our Reunion Chairman and with the able-bodied assistance from Jack Hale; Lou and Pat Catron; Roy (Ozzie) Osborne and Lavon Dyer, they have put together one heck of a reunion. Now it's your turn as members of the association to get involved. The **Hotel** registration package should be in your hands by now as we mailed it out around the first week in May. If you have not received your package as of yet; **Please call me (619) 449-8031 or Joe Bland @ (609) 267-4035** and we will get one mailed out to you ASAP. In June we will mail out the **Reunion** registration package. What we really need now is a quick turnaround on your packages so Joe and his group know how many are coming and how to plan the tours; name tags, hospitality room booze; dinner/dance (dress-up drunk) and other excitement he has in store for you. Please send all responses and money to Lou and Pat Catron 9707 Lamar Street; Spring Valley, CA. 91977-2814. Roy Osborne has graciously made arrangements for design and preparations for the 1996 San Diego Reunion name tags to be proudly worn while at the reunion and for keepsakes when you return. Isabel and I are really looking forward to seeing **all** of our shipmates in October 1996. **Remember we need your responses NLT 30 August 1996!**

From the Secretary: I know Kathy and I are really looking forward to the reunion. Kathy already has our tickets purchased and we are planning to spend a whole week in the San Diego area visiting old shipmates. As I've said before; Kathy is really looking forward to the San Diego zoo; and I'm looking forward to Tijuana. I guess they both fall under the category of **ZOO ???** Ernie has asked me to pass on some general information to you concerning the reunion. It will be held in San Diego CA. On the 4th; 5th and 6th of October 1996. The hotel is in Hotel Circle on the south section. If you are not familiar with the town, hotel circle is away from downtown but is extremely handy to everything in the entire San Diego area. Most major airlines serve San Diego through Lindburg Airport located right on the bay. It's an interesting flight into and out of the airport as you can see most of the city and bay as you land or take off. **Delta** airlines has again agreed to support the reunion as the Host Airline. **Delta** is offering a 5% discount off any **Delta** domestic fare or a 10% discount off of their **Y06 or YR06 fares**. If you are interested call **1-800-241 6760** for reservations or inquiry. Mention the Navy Nuclear Weapons Association and **Delta file number XR3000**. If you experience any problems with Delta (reservations or in flight) please call 1-800-532-4777 from 8:00am to 11:00pm EST. Personal experience is that there are always better prices out in the market place than the host airline offers if you look around or use a travel agent. Only you can decide which airlines best meets you schedules and pocketbooks. The **Regency Plaza Hotel** in hotel circle is our host hotel. They will be offering transportation to and from the airport (call local 291-8790). They also will provide transportation to/from the **AMTRAK** station for those of you traveling by train. Also they have agreed to furnish complimentary transportation for us to the Fashion Valley Shopping Mall; Sea World and to Old Town San Diego. That way you all can get out in your spare time to do some sight-seeing and shopping. (If Joe has allowed some spare time for you with all of his plans) As Ernie has asked, please be responsive to Joe and his committee. They need the information on who is attending as soon as possible (you remember ASAP don't you) so that they can show you a good time in the old town that night. Please respond NLT 30 August and make your hotel reservation as soon as your travel plans are firm lest they be out of rooms. See you there shipmates.

On to some sad news, our association has lost one of its most supportive sponsors and members. Charlie Berger reported to the Supreme Commander's staff on 5 March 1996 with his seabag on his shoulder. On 22 March 1996, being the loyal wife that she has always been; Margaret Berger joined her husband on their final tour. We (the association; especially the Oklahoma contingent; and Kathy and I) will miss them both. Charlie was responsible for the original design, development and maintenance of the NNWA Memorial Plaque that we display at every reunion. That memorial plaque is dedicated to all of our past shipmate. It is a fitting and lasting tribute to Charlie Berger who gave so much to this association.

Thought of the Day: Knowledge comes and knowledge goes; but wisdom lingers for eternity.

If you must borrow money, borrow it from a pessimist. They never expects to get it back !

Do you know that this is probably the only country where it takes more brains to prepare an Income Tax return than it does to earn the income ???

Points to Ponder: Just celebrating my 56th birthday this week I reflected on those thing in my life that have changed so drastically. I remember being around 12 years old before I saw my first television. My grandparents had one that was a 10 inch oval screen and the only thing that was on then was Wrestling and Ed Sullivan. I remember my first airplane ride. It was on a Bi-plane and it cost my dad \$3.00 on his hard earned \$25.00 weekly salary. I remember riding the train from Norfolk VA. (my first real duty station) to Ohio on long weekends because there were no scheduled airlines into or out of Norfolk them. From that humble beginning we have gone prop jobs to supersonic, from huge aircraft to stealth, from the SS-1 Hunley to the USS Tennessee SSBN class D-5 Nuclear SLBM's that can hit a target from 5,000 plus miles away; from BI-planes to the moon and return. We have accomplished the impossible in my lifetime; except for one minor thing. We need to find a way to be able to, not only pass our experiences of life on to our children and grandchildren; but also find a way to allow them to accept those experiences without the common comeback "You don't know or understand". Any Idea's???

Sea Story Time: In the January edition of the newsletter; I mentioned that I would try and publish any humorous items that the membership sent me. I figured that there were plenty of stories out there that I could clean up and change the names to protect the innocent ???, but that other people could easily recognize as one of the many sea stories that center around our membership. Sorry to say that I have not yet received any such correspondence, so I guess I'll spin another yard or so myself. By the way, do you know the difference between a Sea Story and a Fairy Tale? The Fairy Tale starts out "Once Upon a Time" and the Sea Story starts out "This Ain't No Sh___". Well, here it goes. Did you ever see in the movies how the British always salute with the palm extended toward the other person? That's funny as the U.S. military always salutes with the palm facing down. Ever wonder why? Most people believe that it is a gesture to show the other person that there is no weapon in the hand so it became a sign of friendship. That is the early origin of the salute, however; here is a bit of traditional trivia that you may not know. Back in the very early days of the British empire many of the British navy broke ranks and become pirates and privateers. When the English finally caught them, most of the crew received punishment to include a tattoo on the palm of their hand. The loyal British military soon starting saluting with the palm up to show their loyalty to the crown. When the upstart United States initially gathered their military forces, we did not have much to choose from, so we saluted palm down to keep everyone in suspense. Now would you consider that a fairy tale or a sea story ??

Lou and Pat Catron have recently computerized our association mailing lists. Our last mailing resulted in many of our newsletters being returned due to changes of addresses that Lou and Pat do not have. If you have moved lately, or if you know of a shipmate who has move in the past couple of years, please convey the changes of addresses to Lou and Pat. We hate to lose shipmates through something as simple as a change in address. By the way; Kathy and I have moved recently. If you need to contact us, we are at 1131-A Natures Way Court, Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034. (904) 277-2476.

When you come to the reunion this October, remember to bring a small gift that signifies your particular home region. We use these at the dinner dance as door prizes. If everyone brings something, then everyone receives something. The tee-shirts that Kathy and I received from the Mustang Ranch in Nevada a couple years ago where really unique.

Next year we will have our reunion in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dee Rochester is hosting the event and promises an excellent reunion. This will commemorate the 50th year of the navy nuclear weapons programs and although it has been significantly reduced in the past four years, what is left is still alive and well. There are still 4517 military, civil service and weapon contractor residing in the Personnel Reliability Program as of December 1995. I wonder how many of you out there are originals? If you were a member of the original navy crews or training crews, let Ernie or Doc know. Maybe we can set up a special recognition at the 50th reunion???

Hope to see you all in San Diego, 4-5-6 October 1996.

Fair Winds and Following Seas; Shipmates. Give us a call (anyone on the board) if you have questions or in some cases; the answers.... Thomas H. Best Sr. Secretary; Navy Nuclear Weapons Association (904) 277-2476

"Reunions" Inc.

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(407) 884-8000 (800) 327-8010 FAX (407) 884-7499

Dear Reunion Member:

Congratulations on your upcoming reunion!

"REUNIONS" Inc. will record the events of your reunion for your reunion committee. We will also compile a Memory Book of the event for you.

We will have a camera set up and photographers to cover the event and ask that **every** reunion member and their guest to please stop by to have your photograph taken. There is no charge or obligation. Photographs of all participants attending the reunion plus activity and candid photos will be compiled into the Reunion Memory Book. If you wish to purchase one of the books the price is \$12.00 plus \$3.00 for postage and handling and can be purchased at the reunion or when you return your proofs after the reunion.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE REUNION, your friends would still enjoy seeing you included in the Memory Book. If you have a 35MM color photo of you and/or your family, please enclose. We will submit the picture to your reunion committee to be included in the Memory Book. Because this is a "custom" book, the process takes approximately four to five months from the date of the reunion for the book to be printed.

IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE REUNION, you can still order a copy of the Memory Book at this time by including your check for \$12.00 plus \$3.00 for postage and handling with the form below and mail to:

**REUNIONS, INC.
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(Detach Here)

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